

APPENDIX B
BLM to USFWS Sec. 7 Letter

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Ridgecrest Field Office
300 South Richmond Road
Ridgecrest, CA 93555-4436



IN REPLY REFER TO:
6840/2880(P)
CACA-046289
CA-650.25

SEP 16 2008

Memorandum

To: Field Supervisor, Ventura Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
From: Field Manager, Ridgecrest Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
Subject: Request for Formal Consultation Regarding the Coso Hay Ranch Pipeline, Inyo County, California

The Ridgecrest Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wishes to rescind its letter requesting concurrence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a determination pursuant to 50 CFR 402.14, that the pipeline construction for the Coso Hay Ranch project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the desert tortoise. The desert tortoise is federally listed as threatened with designated critical habitat and a completed recovery plan (1994). This project is not in critical habitat. After further review of new data, we have determined that the project is likely to adversely affect the desert tortoise.

The Environmental Impact Report prepared by Inyo County contains all pertinent information with regard to the biological findings. The proposed pipeline and the Gill Station Coso Road were surveyed most recently in 2007 and sign found within the zone of influence for both. These findings are the reason for our new determination. The Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Field Office wishes to initiate formal Endangered Species Act consultation, pursuant to 50 CFR 402.14, for the Coso Ranch pipeline right-of-way.

Pursuant to the implementing regulations for section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act at 50 CFR 402.14(c), we are providing the required information for initiation of formal consultation by referencing the environmental impact report prepared by the County of Inyo. The required information and its page numbers in the environmental impact report follow:

- (1) A description of the action to be considered – [EIR]
- (2) A description of the specific area that may be affected by the action – [Page 3.4-1 through 3.4-44]
- (3) A description of any listed species or critical habitat that may be affected by the action – [Page 2.4-6 through 2.4-16]
- (4) A description of the manner in which the action may affect any listed species or critical habitat and an analysis of any cumulative effects – [3.4-23 through 3.4-38];



Ray Bransfield of your staff has informed up that the County of Inyo has provided you a copy of the draft environmental impact report (402.14(c)(5)) and that no further information is needed to satisfy 50 CFR 402.14(c)(6).

Please contact Robert Parker (760) 384-5425 of the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office for additional information or questions.

Attachments:

Coso EIR Bio Sections

cc:

Endangered Species Coordinator, California State Office (w/o encl.)

Larry LaPré, Endangered Species Coordinator, California Desert District Office (w/o encl.)

Environmental Planning & Management Department, NAWS (w/o encl.)

Chris Ellis (w/o encl.)

Colleen Brock (w/o encl.)